DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 330 874 CE 057 707

AUTHOR Johnson, Dell
TITLE Teaching Basic Writing Skills to Adults: Introduction.
PUB DATE 90
NOTE 11p.
PUB TYPE Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Basic Education; *Adult Education; Annotated Bibliographies; Classroom Techniques; *High School Equivalency Programs; Literature Reviews; Teaching Methods; *Writing Instruction; *Writing Skills
IDENTIFIERS *General Educational Development Tests

ABSTRACT

This publication contains an annotated bibliography of 19 sources of information for instructors of General Educational Development Test (GED) preparation classes and adult basic education classes. An introduction discusses the literature search that identified materials and information to help GED instructors teach adult education, generally, and writing instruction, specifically. It describes the sources and the evaluation of those sources to locate practical suggestions for activities on teaching writing skills or easily understood insights or strategies for teaching adults. The annotated bibliography gives examples of these types of sources: articles, books, student study guides, and organizations. A brief introduction to each type of source offers suggestions for locating more resources. Annotations of print materials, which are in alphabetical order by author, provide this information: author(s), title, publisher and date of publication, pagination, and content summary. Annotations of organizations, arranged alphabetically by name of organization, provide this information: address, telephone number, and description of services. An attachment is a "pathfinder," a shorter version of the annotated bibliography containing fewer annotations. (YLB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D Johnson

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ED330874

Dell Johnson

TEACHING BASIC WRITING SKILLS TO ADULTS: Introduction

The General Educational Development (GED) Test has since 1988 contained a segment called the Writing Sample which requires the test taker to write a composition on an assigned topic in a 45 minute time-limit. All the essays from Texas are scored at the University of Texas at Austin, Extension Instruction and Materials Division under contract from the Texas Education Agency. Each sample is scored holistically by two readers using a six-point rating scale. The essay's overall effectiveness is considered more important than any mechanical errors.

The Texas Education Agency authorizes more than 60 cooperatives in the state to provide free adult basic education and GED preparation classes. Instructors for these classes are hired through independent school districts or community colleges, and are usually certified teachers. Other agencies such as community organizations, churches and libraries also offer GED preparation sessions which are taught by volunteers who may or may not be certified. GED instructors who have little or no training in teaching adults or teaching writing skills may be at a loss for information on how to help their students score well on the writing sample. They could use suggestions on adult education in general and/or on writing instruction. The most helpful items are those that are available locally at little or no cost.

I began my search for appropriate materials with CD-ROM products, ERIC, BIP and Ulrich's using the terms "adult basic education," "GED," ""writing skills" and "instruction." Some ERIC documents are available on this topic. I located the microfiche copies

CE057707

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

of some pertinent titles and selected four of the best ones to include. I used Books in Print to get a list of likely book titles. Then I used UTCAT and Austin Public Library's online catalog to see which items would be readily available. More books were available from UT (PCL) than from Austin Public Library. Ulrich's revealed that only a few periodicals exist on this topic. The difficulty of locating usable titles on teaching writing skills seems to indicate that instructors may have to buy materials for themselves. In contrast, student study guides for the GED are readily available in public and academic libraries, at bookstores, and even at some corporate libraries.

Next I evaluated all of the sources I could find. I wanted current information, since the Writing Sample has only been required since 1988. I wanted practical suggestions for activities on teaching writing skills or easily understood insights or strategies for teaching adults. I felt that theoretical information or detailed curriculum guides would not be helpful, since many of the GED instructors are working second jobs and have no time for extensive research. I excluded periodicals since I felt the instructors would not be interested in subscribing because it takes many weeks for a subscription to start arriving. I excluded articles because to find items from the specialized publications on this topic would require a very large academic library, and the majority of my audience will not have access to one.

TEACHING BASIC WRITING SKILLS TO ADULTS:
Annotated Bibliography

Several types of sources are available that offer advice to instructors of GED preparation classes and adult basic education classes, including articles, books, student study guides and agencies. This list gives examples of each type. Although these were found in Austin, similar sources should be available in most areas of the state. The format for these entries comes from the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 2nd ed. NY: Modern Language Association, 1984.

ARTICLES AND DOCUMENTS: No specific journals or magazines are recommended, since due to the expense and time delay in receiving subscriptions, most GED instructors will not be interested in subscribing. ERIC, a national educational information clearinghouse, publishes printed indexes to educational materials, which are also available in computer databases in some academic and public libraries. When appropriate items are selected, copies can be ordered directly from ERIC in Alexandria, VA (1-800-227-3742) for a small fee ($1.85 per 25 pages), or copies can be made from ERIC microforms if the library owns them (but this can become expensive for longer documents, since photocopies may costs up to 25 cents per page). A librarian can help with the search for summaries of pertinent articles. Several types of materials are included in ERIC, from curriculum guides to lesson plans to journal articles. Each item listed in ERIC is assigned a unique number beginning with ED or EJ that can be used to identify it for locating microform copies or for ordering paper copies.

Suggested **ERIC documents:**

Glustrom, Merrill. Annotated Bibliography of Writing Materials for Use by GED Instructors in Preparation for the GED Writing Sample. Phoenix, AZ: Arizona Dept. of State, Div. of Adult Education and Yavapai College, Prescott, AZ, 1987. 176 pgs. (ED305483).

Listed here are reviews of GED study guides provided by various publishers and sample exercises from some of the non-GED publisher texts. Complete information is included which will help the instructor choose a primary text and supplemental texts, depending on the level of the students. Publishers' addresses are included.

Hammond, Dorothy and Joseph Mangano. Teaching Writing to Adults: An Inservice Education Manual. Albany, NY: State University of New York and New York State Education Dept. Bureau of Adult and Continuing Education Program Development. Albany, NY, 1986, 118 pgs. (ED290876).

An inservice training manual for teachers in New York's GED program, this item is aimed specifically at the writing sample portion of the test, giving information on requirements, holistic scoring, rating sheets, sample essays. Actual lesson plans for conducting classes to teach adults how to write are given, including prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and evaluating. Contains glossary and bibliography.

Introducing Writing to GED/ABE Students: Program Handbook. Albuquerque, NM: New Mexico State Dept. of Educational Administration and New Mexico State Dept. of Education, Santa Fe, Div. of Vocational, Technical and Adult Education, 1987. 85 pgs. (ED907416).
Designed for professional development for New Mexico instructors of GED and ABE (Adult Basic Education), this handbook discusses methods for collaborative teaching situations. The various stages of writing are described: prewriting, outlining, writing, revising, and editing. The program also discusses the test criteria and the use of freewriting to encourage student participation. Includes reproducible resources and sample assignments plus a glossary and tips for teachers of writing.

Vucinich, Janet and Michaele O'Conlin. Ideabook on Writing for GED Instructors in Adult Basic Education. Albuquerque, NM: New Mexico University, Dept. of Educational Administration and New Mexico State Dept. of Education, Santa Fe. Div. of Vocational, Technical and Adult Education, 1988. 82 pgs. (ED307417).
Instructional activities for teaching writing to adults are presented. The POWER format is described: prewriting, organizing, writing, editing, rewriting. Sample writing prompts for practice essays, reproducible student forms and an essay by Bertrand Russell are provided.

BOOKS: Several titles are available that offer suggestions on teaching adults and a few even address the teaching of writing skills. A survey of the catalogs of Austin Public Library and the UT General Libraries reveals that an academic library is more likely to contain useful titles than a public library, even a large one. These titles can be purchased from commercial bookstores, but would probably be special-order items rather than those immediately available. Most could be ordered directly from the publishers, therefore addresses and phone numbers are provided, if available. Also included are code numbers (ISBN numbers) for the books which may help librarians or booksellers to identify the specific titles. Another option is interlibrary loan. Most public libraries in Texas are associated with the Texas Library System, which facilitates interlibrary loans between members. Academic libraries such as UT also will fill interlibrary loan requests for other libraries. The local public librarian or a librarian at a nearby academic library can help with this process. Allow a minimum of 2 to 3 weeks for requests to be filled. Overall, getting books on this topic may take some time, but it can be done.

Suggested books:

Klevins, Chester, ed. Materials and Methods in Adult and Continuing Education. Los Angeles: Klevins Pub., 1982. [Klevins Publications, PO Box 143, Canoga Park, CA 91305. (805) 944-4111, (213) 884-0593. LC number 82-83766.]
The editor collected 49 chapters by experts in the field. Although somewhat dated, this book presents a good overview of the adult learning process. "Part IV Teaching-Learning Process" and "Part V How To" are especially useful. A chapter on "Information Retrieval Systems" suggests teaching adult learners how to use databases for researching their writing projects. This focus on teaching the methods of access to information is unique and will be effective if local resources are available for such a project. Some sections contain sample questions, exercises and references.

Langerman, Phillip D., ed. You Can Be a Successful Teacher of Adults. American Association for Adult and Continuing Education, 1974. [AAACE, 1112 16th St., NW, Suite 420, Washington, DC 20036. (202) 463-6333. LC number 74-81224.]
Essays present basic techniques for teaching adult learners, including practical tips on the characteristics of adult learners, student needs, materials, using audio-visuals, evaluation techniques. The book includes a section on facing fears about teaching adults. The information is accurate in spite of the old publication date. The AAACE is affiliated with the National Education Agency, which lists this book as an "authoritative sourcebook and information guide" (Preface).

Moore , David P. and Mary A Poppino. Successful Tutoring: A Practical Guide to Adult Learning Processes. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1983. [CC Thomas, 2600 S. First ST., Springfield, IL 62794, (217) 789-8980. ISBN number 0-398-04763-4.]
According to the preface, this book focuses on a "working knowledge of learning processes" needed for effective tutoring of adults. Includes a section specifically devoted to writing and geared to "help content area tutors assist students with pre-writing activities and to assist writing tutors in refining their tutoring skills in the areas of pre-writing, writing and editing." Lists of recommended readings accompany each chapter.

Rossman, Mark H., Elizabeth C. Fisk and Janet E. Roehl. Teaching and Learning Basic Skills: A Guide for Adult Basic Education and Developmental Education Programs. NY: Columbia U. Teachers College Press, 1984. [Teachers College, 1234 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10027 (800) 445-6638. ISBN number 0-8077-2746-6.]
An overview of ABE and GED programs is offered including clientele, methods and issues. General information on the nature of the adult learner and the process of teaching adults is presented, but nothing specifically addresses teaching writing skills. An extensive bibliography and index are included.

Soifer, Rena, et. al. The Complete Theory-to-Practice Handbook of Adult Literacy: Curriculum Design and Teaching Approaches. NY: Columbia University Teachers College Press, 1990. [Teachers College, 1234 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10027 (800) 445-6638. ISBN number 0-8077-302809.]
Currency and specific information on writing skills make this selection a "must." It focuses on teachers of adults in public school and community education programs, business and industrial settings and correctional institutions, plus advisors and administrators of these programs. The authors emphasize the whole language approach to teaching and learning, including listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. The importance of choosing content which is significant to the learner is stressed. A valuable section addresses literacy in the information age, with suggestions for including computer skills in the program. All the authors are associated with The Academy, the literacy project of Eastern Michigan University. Especially significant are "Chapter 3: GED Connection" and "Appendix C: Organizations and Journals about Adult Literacy". Professional references and a list of materials are included. This title is recommended for purchase by all libraries or other collections of materials which serve GED or ABE instructors.

STUDENT STUDY GUIDES: Most of the popular commercially available study guides for the GED test claim the teacher "needs no other materials" in order to prepare the students for the test. This claim is made to convince the buyers that the guides will be effective whether or not the student-purchaser enrolls for a preparation class. These guides vary in quality, price and reading level. No one title is perfect in all situations. Instructors will want to look at several titles and be aware of the differences in them. Such guides are available in most public and academic libraries as well as bookstores everywhere.

Representative list of **study guides.**

Beers, James W. and J. Thomas Gill. GED Writing Sample. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn, 1988. [Steck-Vaughn Co. 3301 Steck Ave. Austin, TX 78758 (800) 531-5015. ISBN number 0-8114-1846-4.]
The authors use the POWER technique to help students approach the writing task through steps: prewriting, organizing, writing, evaluating and revising. This workbook has a fairly simple reading level, photos and lots of space for students to fill in their answers. Answer keys are included to help student check their own work. "Coaching sheets" offer further teaching and advice if the student has difficulty in any area. A "Writer's Handbook" offers instructions on grammatical, spelling and punctuation rules.

Cambridge Comprehensive Program for the High School Equivalency Exam. NY: Cambridge, 1987. [Cambridge Book Co. Sylvan Rd. Rte. 9W. Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632 (800) 221-4764. ISBN number 0-8428-8700-8.]
This guide covers all the sections of the GED. Unit II focuses on the essay-writing portion. Chapters include "Daily Writing," "The Writing

Process," and "Reviewing the Writing Process." The book includes practice tests with answers. The concept of holistic scoring is explained for the students and a short paragraph tells them how to evaluate their own essay writing. This would help students with average to good reading ability, but is too technical for below average readers and writers.

Rockowitz, Murray, Samuel C Brownstein and Max Peters. How to Prepare for the GED High School Equivalency Examination. 8th ed. NY: Barron's, 1990. [Barron's Educational Series, 250 Wireless Blvd., Hauppauge, NY 11788. (800) 645-3476. ISBN number 0-8120-4397-9.]

A comprehensive guide to all portions of the GED, this book has an excellent introductory chapter answering commonly asked questions about the test with a timetable summarizing the time limits, number of questions, etc. for each section. Also helpful is a chapter to help students organize their plan of study. These suggestions will help new teachers who are unfamiliar with the test. Chapt. 5 is devoted specifically to the Writing Skills Part II Essay Test. In 30 pages it includes instructions, sample exercises and examples of appropriate essays. A copy of the essay scoring guide is included, but no explanation is given of how those criteria actually apply to a sample paper. The students are advised that if they "treat the less obvious but more important aspect of the topic," they will get a superior grade. This advice could confuse students, since superior papers must ALSO have few or no errors in organization and mechanics, along with sufficient supporting details for each major point. This guide assumes a medium-to-good reading level for its readers.

Rozakis, Laurie. Activity Book for "Put It in Writing": Using Paragraphs for Real Life Writing. NY: Cambridge, 1987. [Cambridge Book Co., Sylvan Rd., Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632. (800) 221-4764. ISBN number 0-8248-9722-4.]

Cambridge produces a series of exercise books to accompany its comprehensive book. This workbook focuses on writing reports and letters using the stages of writing: planning, writing, and revising. A much simpler reading level and short exercises make this item appropriate for students with difficulties in reading or writing. Others in the series are similar.

Swartz, Richard. Real Writing for the GED Essay Test. NY: Contemporary, 1988. [Contemporary Books, 180 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60601. (312) 782-9181. ISBN number 0-8092-4682-1.]

Chapters on organizing, supporting, controlling, evaluating written work are included. The workbook gives samples of actual student essays to GED-type topics and offers critiques of these essays. "Instructors get a clear look at the kinds of writing they may expect from their students, and students get a realistic view of the writing of their peers" (Preface). Sample topics are given for student practice, and students are shown step-by-step how essays will be evaluated by the holistic technique. The reading level is appropriate for all but the least able readers.

ORGANIZATIONS: Many agencies and associations concentrate on adult literacy and adult education. The Encyclopedia of Associations, available at most libraries, can help locate local or state level organizations. Most of these organizations provide low cost or free materials to members and even to the general public.

Selected organizations focusing on adult education:

Adult Learning and Literacy Clearinghouse. College of Education. Texas A&M University. College Station, TX 77843 (409) 845-6615.
This organization owns a large collection of materials which it lends to practitioners throughout the state. Publishes bibliographies of the materials. Call and request the GED Bibliography. Select items which may be helpful and request to borrow them from the Clearinghouse. Some related bibliographies may also be pertinent: Reading and ESL. Most items are free.

American Association for Adult & Continuing Education. 1112 16th St. NW, Suite 420. Washington, DC 20036. (202) 463-6333.
The AAACE provides low cost materials for teachers of adult education such as Langerman's book (listed in Books section). Their quarterly journal is Adult Education and they publish the AAACE Newsletter.

Texas Education Agency. Regional Education Service Centers.
Regional Service Centers offer materials on loan to Texas teachers. Region XIII in Austin can be reached at (512) 929-1313. Materials can be borrowed through public school librarians at each campus. Check with the local school librarian for more information or call the appropriate Region ESC.

Texas Library Systems. The state funds ten regions which cooperate in interlibrary loans, equipment purchases and special projects of general concern, such as literacy. The Central Texas Library System, including the Austin area, has 62 member libraries. Call the System Coordinator at (512) 473-4288 or ask at the local public library for information on borrowing the system's literacy materials or on other interlibrary loan requests. Every county in Texas is included in one of the systems.

Travis County Adult Literacy Council. PO Box 1748 Austin, TX 78767 (512) 478-7323. [Palm Elem. School Bldg., E. 1st St. & I-35]
The Council offers reading assessment tests and gives tutoring for adults reading at levels of 4th grade or below. It refers more skilled readers to Austin Community College for GED preparation classes. There are counterparts to this organization in all areas of the state. They can offer help and advice to students who may not be ready for the GED yet.

Teaching Basic Writing Skills to Adults:

A Pathfinder for GED Instructors

Preparing adults for the Writing Sample portion of the GED test presents a unique challenge to instructors. Try these suggested sources, and for more information ask a librarian.

ARTICLES AND DOCUMENTS: ERIC, a national clearinghouse for educational information, publishes printed and electronic indexes to educational materials. Copies of documents can be ordered directly from ERIC in Alexandria, VA (1-800-227-3742) for a small fee ($1.85 per 25 pages). Several types of materials are included in ERIC, from curriculum guides to lesson plans to journal articles. The ED number will help with locating and ordering selections.

Glustrom, Merrill. Annotated Bibliography of Writing Materials for Use by GED Instructors in Preparation for the GED Writing Sample. 1987. 176 pgs. (ED305483).
Lists reviews of GED study guides provided by various publishers and sample exercises from some of the non-GED publisher texts.

Vucinich, Janet and Michaele O'Conlin. Ideabook on Writing for GED Instructors in Adult Basic Education. 1988. 82 pgs. (ED307417).
The POWER format is described: prewriting, organizing, writing, editing, rewriting. Sample writing prompts for practice essays, reproducible student forms.

BOOKS: These titles can purchased from commercial bookstores, probably as special-order items, or ordered directly from the publishers. Another option is interlibrary loan.

Langerman, Phillip D., ed. You Can Be a Successful Teacher of Adults. American Association for Adult and Continuing Education, 1974. [1112 16th St., NW, Suite 420, Washington, DC 20036. (202) 463-6333. LC number 74-81224.]
Includes practical tips on the characteristics of adult learners, student needs, materials, using audio-visuals, evaluation techniques, etc. Includes a section on facing fears about teaching adults.

Soifer, Rena et. al. The Complete Theory-to-Practice Handbook of Adult Literacy: Curriculum Design and Teaching Approaches. NY: Columbia University Teachers College Press, 1990. [Teachers College, 1234 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10027 (800) 445-6638. ISBN number 0-8077-302809.]
Especially significant are Chapter 3: GED Connection and Appendix C: Organizations and Journals about Adult Literacy. Advocates the whole language approach to teaching: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

STUDENT STUDY GUIDES: These guides vary in quality, price and reading level. Instructors will want to look at several titles.

Rozakis, Laurie. Activity Book for "Put It in Writing": Using Paragraphs for Real Life Writing. NY: Cambridge, 1987. [Cambridge Book Co., Sylvan Rd., Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632. (800) 221-4764. ISBN number 0-8248-9722-4.]
Workbook focuses on writing reports and letters using the stages of writing: planning, writing, and revising.

Swartz, Richard. Real Writing for the GED Essay Test. NY: Contemporary, 1988. [Contemporary Books, 180 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60601. (312) 782-9181. ISBN number 0-8092-4682-1.]
Includes chapters on organizing, supporting, controlling, evaluating written work. Sample topics are given for student practice, and students are shown step-by-step how essays will be evaluated by the holistic technique.

ORGANIZATIONS: Many agencies and associations concentrate on adult literacy and adult education. The Encyclopedia of Associations, available at most libraries, can help locate local or state level organizations.

Adult Learning and Literacy Clearinghouse. College of Education. Texas A&M University. College Station, TX 77843 (409) 845-6615.
Owns a large collection of materials which it lends to practitioners throughout the state. Publishes bibliographies of the materials. Call and request the GED Bibliography. Most items are free.

American Association for Adult & Continuing Education. 1112 16th St. NW, Suite 420. Washington, DC 20036. (202) 463-6333.
Provides low cost materials for teachers of adult education such as Langerman (listed in Books section). Their quarterly journal is Adult Education and they publish the AAACE Newsletter.

Texas Education Agency. Regional Education Service Centers. Region XIII in Austin can be reached at (512) 929-1313. Materials can be borrowed through public school librarians at each campus. Each school district in Texas is served by a Service Center.

Texas Library Systems. Every county in Texas is included in one of the state funded library cooperatives. The Central Texas Library System, including the Austin area, has 62 member libraries. Call the System Coordinator at (512) 473-4288 or ask at the local public library about interlibrary loans and the System's literacy program.